

The Mayor and Council of Hurlock

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CHARLES T. CEPHAS, SR.
PARKER J. DURHAM
BONNIE FRANZ
EARL H. MURPHY
JERRY L. RHUE, SR.

MINUTES OPEN SESSION MEETING MARCH 24, 2014 6:00 P.M.

Mayor Spratt called the meeting of March 24, 2014, to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Hurlock Town Office located at 311 Charles Street. Following the Pledge of Allegiance, Ms Blanch Powell said the opening prayer. The roll call was then taken. Those in attendance were: Council members Parker Durham, Jerry Rhue, Bonnie Franz, Earl Murphy, Charles Cephas, Mayor Joyce Spratt, and Clerk John Avery.

Councilman Rhue made a Motion to approve the Agenda. Councilwoman Franz seconded the Motion. With no discussion and no one opposed, the Motion to approve the agenda was passed and carried with a vote of 5-0.

The Minutes of the Open Session Meeting held on March 10, 2014 were approved with one correction. Councilman Durham made a Motion to approve the minutes with a correction on page 4; that should read, "**Monroe Quailes was disheartened to hear Councilman Durham patronize and acknowledge the new group (HCSA Betterment of Hurlock), not the Ministers & Citizens.**" With that correction made, Councilwoman Franz seconded the Motion to approve the minutes. With no discussion and no one opposed, the Motion to approve the minutes was passed and carried with a vote of 5-0.

Mayor's Report - Mayor Spratt announced that the newsletter would be going out this week. Also the banners that had been ordered should arrive in approximately 2-3 weeks. There were two styles of banners, one is dark green with a train, and the logo, "Welcome to Hurlock". The second banner has an eagle on it and they will be used on Veteran's Day.

Mayor Spratt further stated that last Tuesday, she and Clerk Avery went to a LGIT meeting in Cambridge for renewal of the Town's insurance. While they were there, the Town of Hurlock was recognized, with an award for the being a member of LGIT for 25 years.

Clerk Avery and Mayor Spratt also attended a Dorchester County Council Meeting last Tuesday evening. Mayor Spratt said she would let County Councilman Rick Price give you information from that meeting.

The Mayor thanked the Hurlock Fire Department and the Police Department for everything they did at the fire on Maryland Avenue a week ago. Anyone that does not have a smoke detector can go to the fire department and they will give you one. For anyone that does have a detector, please remember to check your batteries.

Contrary to rumors circulating, all fire hydrants in the Town of Hurlock do work and they will be put on a maintenance schedule.

There will be a spring clothing drive during the first week of May. Anyone wishing to donate can bring their donations to the Town Office. The clothing will be distributed at the old library. Citizens are invited to help with the drive.

Water bills will be going out next week. The credit card machine is working great. The Town is willing to work with residents that are behind on their bill. If you wish to pay a little each week or each month so that you are not hit with the whole bill at one time, the Town will work with you on that.

Mayor Spratt reported the dinner for the Lion's Club held last week sold 500 tickets. They have been doing these dinners for 19 years and in those years, a total of \$67,000.00 has been raised to help with Scholarships for North Dorchester High School students. The Mayor thanked everyone that helped with the dinner.

On Thursday of last week the Mayor, Clerk Avery and Chief Hutton met with Chesapeake Utilities about natural gas. To obtain the services of their company they would need to have 90% participation from the residents of the Town. There is quite an expense for the company to have natural gas installed and it is expensive for residents to switch over from whatever form of heating and/or hot water they are currently using to natural gas.

Mayor Spratt and Clerk Avery are to attend a LESMA dinner this Thursday in Salisbury. There is also a lunch that Clerk Avery and Mayor Spratt will attend on the same day regarding an organization called CASA. It pertains to court appointed advocates. There will be more information regarding this issue at the next council meeting.

Mayor Spratt reminded the council, the MML Convention early bird registration is due by April 11, 2014. Spring clean-up day is April 12th. There will also be a special clean-up day for limbs, brush, leaves, etc. on April 26th. There are flyers with information available on this. Mayor Spratt asked if there were any questions. Councilman Durham asked for clarification on the acronyms used such as; LGIT which means Local Government Interest Trust, which is a way of

local municipalities and county governments to share a pool of insurance coverage. MML means Maryland Municipal League, is a group of municipalities that team together, LESMA stands for Lower Eastern Shore Mayor's Association.

County Councilman Rick Price Report - Please see attached report for information on the meeting. Mayor Spratt spoke regarding the excise tax issue. She stated she would like to see the tax go away. There was only \$80,000.00 collected in the county last year, then they were threatened that they would not get anything for the Sheriff's department, new schools, etc., but that amount of money does not go very far. The Mayor's feeling is that money could be found somewhere else. Maybe cut expenses somewhere so the money could come back to be used for the Sheriff's department and whatever else it would be used for. Councilman Price replied that when the excise first started there was a building boom, but has since gone down.

Police Report – Chief of Police Les Hutton reported that calls were spread out, meaning there is not a specific high crime area in town. The police department handles a lot of calls that are not reportable. There were 16 reported cases since the last council meeting, of which 14 have been closed.

Fire Department Report – David Carrier reported about the fire last week on Maryland Avenue. He thanked the police, the Mayor and Clerk Avery. Since the last council meeting, the fire department has had 34 responses; 15 EMS responses, 19 fire responses. Mr. Carrier thanked the Mayor and Council for attending the fire department banquet.

Old Business – Councilman Earl Murphy reported on the Veterans Park and showed some ideas. There would be seats made from railroad ties from the M&D Railroad. There would also be a star as a concept for all points representing all 5 branches of the military and in the center there would be the American flag and of course the POW. Ideas included introducing the Maryland, Dorchester, and the Town flag somewhere in the presentation. Mr. Murphy stated that this is just the first step.

Councilman Jerry Rhue had nothing to report on Main Street due to the severe weather.

New Business - Clerk Avery spoke regarding the repairs to the ENR filter tanks at the wastewater plant. Mr. Avery presented pictures of the tanks and the condition of the interior of the tanks. The coating inside is deteriorating; there is blistering and rust developing. At the bottom of the tank there is a sand filter bed with drain tiles underneath. All of that needs to be removed and install new tiles that are caulked in. The sand would be replaced after the tanks have been completely sandblasted and recoated. The projected cost of the work is \$55,000.00 for both tanks. They are looking at buying parts directly from the manufacturer. The cost of materials of sand, tiles, and caulk would be approximately \$41,000.00 with a projected labor cost of \$14,000.00. This cost is with the wastewater treatment employees doing a lot of the work themselves. This will extend the life of the tanks considerably. If not done, there will eventually be holes in them and new tanks could cost approximately a million dollars. Clerk Avery is asking for approval from the council to have the work done. Councilman Rhue asked what the time frame is to have this project completed. Clerk Avery responded approximately 3-4 weeks.

Councilman Rhue made a Motion to approve having the work done, Councilman Murphy seconded the Motion. With no further discussion and with a vote of 5-0, the Motion was passed and carried to move forward with having the two tanks at the wastewater treatment plant repaired.

Council Comments – Councilman Jerry Rhue thanked Len Pfeffer for getting the family that was burned out of their home, located for 3 nights. It is possible the house can be rebuilt. Also the dog that was in the house is okay.

Councilwoman Franz stated that next Wednesday she would be celebrating 41 years at the Amick plant.

Councilman Murphy addressed the letter from the Hurlock Citizens and Seniors Association given to the council by Paul Bovankovich. Councilman Murphy said he phoned Mr. Bovankovich and responded to the question of how he felt about the Town of Hurlock; he replied that he loves the town. After being elected to the council, there are goals he has set for the betterment of the Town. He further stated he is always available to everyone in the town. Councilman Murphy has mentioned to the Boy Scouts to please provide their brochures to the town and if anyone knows of youth organizations that have information, please share this with the town. He said his church has a lot of programs for the youth. Councilman Murphy feels it is important for young people to be involved in positive programs.

Councilman Murphy also spoke about the situation with Dollar General. There is a recommendation for the rezoning of the property. He asks the citizens to ask themselves what they can do as a neighbor or a friend to help the town become a better place to live. Councilman Murphy also has some ideas regarding the trash can idea that was presented at the last meeting, and urged citizens to get involved.

Public Comment – Michael Nordstrom spoke about the excise tax and impact fees have been lowered. The impact fees have been lowered from \$5,000.00 each to \$2,000.00 each for water & sewer. Mr. Nordstrom asked the Council to lower the fees even more, if possible. He told Councilman Murphy he would be very happy to work with him in the planning of the Veteran's Park. Mr. Nordstrom stated that in the 3 months since the new council took office they have shown to be an active council working to get things accomplished, and he hopes they continue to stay focused and move forward. He also commended David Carrier for committing his life to saving lives wherever he is.

Reverend Tolley prays for everyone in the Town. He stated that his church also has programs for youth; elementary age on Sundays and Wednesdays and Fridays they have teen events.

A representative from Snip Tuck was present, but was not on the Agenda. Councilman Cephas asked the Mayor & Council to let the person speak. Mayor Spratt asked the citizens if there were any questions for the representative. Ms. Pat Bovankovich stated she had tried to contact Snip Tuck but has not received a response. Snip Tuck is currently closed, but has volunteers taking calls, and should be returning phone calls. Ms. Pat stated she has 3 wild cats that need to be taken. She is unable to capture the cats, but would like to have them fixed. Mayor Spratt stated

the Town voted to allocate \$2,000.00 with a grant to match those funds to have cats captured and taken to be spayed/neutered. The cats would then be returned to the area they came from. The representative explained that typically when there is a large group of feral cats in an area, someone is feeding the cats, but not having them treated medically. What Snip Tuck does is set up traps to capture the cats, give a rabies vaccine, spay/neuter the cat, snip their left ear which is a universal sign that the cat has been altered and gives the cat a rabies shot and then returns the cat. Feral cats do not live as long as a household pet, so the colony of cats would decrease over time. There was more discussion on this subject and the dispersion of funds that are available.

There being no further business or discussion, a Motion was made by Councilman Murphy to adjourn the meeting. The Motion was seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m. The next council meeting will be held on April 14, 2014.

Respectively submitted,


John Avery
Clerk/Treasurer

Approved: Mayor Spratt:



Council members:








**MOTIONS AND VOTES BY COUNCIL MEMBERS
OPEN SESSION MEETING
MARCH 24, 2014**

Motion to approve the Agenda was made by Councilman Rhue. Councilman Franz seconded the Motion and with no discussion and no one opposed the Motion to approve the agenda was passed and carried with a vote of 5-0.

Motion to approve Minutes of the Open Session Meeting held on March 10, 2014 was made by Councilman Durham with one correction on page 4; that should read, "**Monroe Quailles was disheartened to hear Councilman Durham patronize and acknowledge the new group (HCSA Betterment of Hurlock), not the Ministers & Citizens**". With that correction made, Council woman Franz seconded the Motion to approve the minutes. With no discussion and no one opposed, the Motion to approve was passed and carried with a vote of 5-0.

Motion to approve having work completed on the two tanks at the wastewater treatment plant, with a cost of \$55,000.00 was made by Councilman Rhue. The Motion was seconded by Councilman Murphy. With no further discussion and with a vote of 5-0, the Motion was passed and carried to move forward with having the work done.